

CHOOSING GROUP CHILD CARE

STAFF TRAINING/EDUCATION

- Are caregivers formally trained in Early Childhood Education? If not, what kind of training do they have?
- [Is the care licensed?](#) If not, have you done the research and the screening to ensure that this is a safe environment?
- Licencing ensures supervision of government regulations on staff-child ratios, group sizes, caregiver training, physical setting, and programs.
- Are the staff-child ratios in accordance with those determined in the [Child Care & Early Years Act](#)?
- Is the chef trained in food preparation?
- How long has the staff member worked with children?

HOURS OF OPERATION/PROCEDURES

- What are the hours of available care?
- Do the hours of operation match your needs?
- What holidays are/are not included?
- Do they charge for late fees? How much?
- When is a child considered sick?
- If the home childcare provider is sick, is there a replacement or back-up?

ENVIRONMENT

- Is the atmosphere secure, warm, inclusive and encouraging?
- Are the caregivers warm and enthusiastic –do they take genuine interest in the children?
- Are toys age-appropriate?

- Are play areas safe (indoor and outdoor)?
- Is the curriculum posted and updated weekly?
- Is the centre meeting the specific needs of all children/abilities?
- Is the menu meeting the needs of all children (consider food allergies)?
- Are there split groups?

STAFF TURNOVER RATE

- How often does staff change? Low staff turnover ensures that a secure relationship can be formed between the caregiver and child.

TIPS

- Visit centres/agencies and observe the interaction between caregivers and children.
- Interview supervisors/caregivers to find out policies and attitudes toward children.
- Ask to see the [Child Care & Early Years Act License](#) and/or their last City Inspection Report.
- Choose child care that best suits your needs.

LOCATING CHILDCARE

- [City of Toronto](#) www.toronto.ca/children
- [Peel](#) peel.cioc.ca
- [Durham](#) www.durham.ca
- [York](#) www.york.ca

RESOURCES

- [Child Care & Early Years Act](#)

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/14c11>

CENTRE CARE VS. HOME CARE: A COMPARISON

	PROS	CONS
CENTRE CARE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable – open every day, (except for statutory holidays) • Licensed, therefore meets government standards • Activities/programs/toys are age-appropriate • Children can interact/make friends with peers • Formally trained staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less flexibility – rigid hours, usually 7:30 am-6:00 pm. • Lack of control in how your child spends his/her day as curriculum is often pre-determined • Cannot care for sick children; you may need back up care if child is ill.
HOME CARE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same caregiver daily; child can bond • If licensed, care meets government standards. If not licensed, you are responsible for screening and interviewing to ensure standards are met • Smaller number of children, individual attention in a family setting • Flexible hours – can tailor to times needed • Control/input on how child spends his/her day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not always reliable, if caregiver is sick back up will be needed • May not be licensed • Conflicts may be more difficult to resolve • Potential for less peer interaction depending on the child's age

For more information on childcare options, financial assistance, and parenting resources, please contact the Family Care Office.

416.978.0951 www.familycare.utoronto.ca

Last revised: August 2023

**FAMILY
CARE
OFFICE**